

Mr. Speaker, this is family unfriendly, because this House, your House, has failed to do its duty. You did not pass your budget in time, you did not pass your appropriations in time, you failed to realize how the Constitution works. And if all of America does not accept your budget, Medicare cuts, tax cuts and all, then there is no deal, no Christmas, sorry, kids, sorry, America.

The Constitution does not work that way. This Congress is not working the way that our forefathers intended it to.

TIME TO BALANCE BUDGET IS NOW

(Mrs. SEASTRAND asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Mr. Speaker, the time to balance the budget is now. For 40 years, the liberal politicians in this town were willing to put off decisions until tomorrow. And look what it got us—a 5 trillion dollar debt.

No, let me rephrase that. Look what it got our children—a 5 trillion dollar debt. You see, Mr. Speaker, that's what this debate is really about. It's about our children and it's about our children's children. Unless we stand firm now, their future doesn't look very bright. But if we can just restrain our spending, we can help restore the American dream for our children.

That is a Christmas gift worth giving the American people. Mr. Speaker, I'm tired of hearing excuses from the President. It's time to do the right thing for our children's future—it's time to balance the budget. So we ask the President, put a real plan on the table. Help us save the next generation. Balance the budget now.

FREE THE NATION'S CAPITAL

(Ms. NORTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to alert this body that the Capital of the United States is still hanging out there about to choke. The conference report that was to materialize yesterday did not because of the complications here and in the Senate.

The conference report, I am told, will come forward today. That would be the ball game. That is the right way to handle this. We are already into extra innings that are killing the Capital of the United States.

An agreement structured by the Speaker himself will come before us as the conference report. Vouchers will be out, not because this body wanted them out or because the Speaker wanted them out, but because of a filibuster in the Senate. It is an act of leadership for the Speaker to bring it forward, and I appreciate that. I understand he will speak for it.

It would be easy for this body to sit this out, but nobody wants to shut the

Capital of the United States down. We are now running on empty. Even the gentleman from New York [Mr. WALSH], who does not support this report, does not want to shut the District down. Do the responsible thing; free the District of Columbia.

TIME FOR SECRETARY O'LEARY TO RESIGN AND FOR THE PRESIDENT TO NEGOTIATE A BALANCED BUDGET

(Mr. TIAHRT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, it is no wonder the President is unable to come up with a balanced budget. He has Secretary O'Leary tied around his neck like a millstone. Secretary O'Leary has taken 16 international trips, she takes as many as 50 staffers with her, 60 other guests, she hires photographers and video crews to catch her at her best. She has 520 public relations employees. She has a personal media consultant, even hired a private investigative firm to see what reporters and Congressmen are trying to see which reporters and Congressmen tarnish her image, all at a cost of about \$30 million to taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, it is not about the tax breaks for the rich or Medicare. That is all bogus. It is about wasting millions of dollars. Mike Royko of the Washington Times had it right:

Buy a rope, tie one end of the rope to Mrs. O'Leary's ankle, tie the other end to her desk. See, whipping the deficit doesn't seem to be so complicated.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for Secretary O'Leary to resign, and it is time for the President to honestly negotiate a balanced budget.

TIME TO STOP PLAYING GAMES

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, last month, Speaker GINGRICH shut down the Government because he did not like his seat on Air Force One. Now he is at it again.

This time Speaker GINGRICH has shut down the Government to try to get his way on the budget, throwing more than 200,000 people out of work a week before Christmas. These families are being used as pawns in the Speaker's attempt to force through huge cuts in Medicare, Medicaid, education, and the environment, all to pay for a \$245 billion tax break for the wealthiest Americans.

Mr. Speaker, they are so wedded to this tax break, the crown jewel of the Contract on America, that they are willing to put the lives of 200,000 working Americans at risk. These folks are not being paid one week before Christmas holidays, and they are willing to put those lives at risk in order to give their rich CEO friends this tax break.

Stop playing games with people's lives. Have a budget that protects Medicare, Medicaid, and America's priorities.

BEAM ME UP

(Mr. HOKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to point out to the gentlewoman who just spoke that as she well knows, it was the President who vetoed three bills that could have put all of those workers back to back.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HOKE. No, I will not yield.

Ms. DELAURO. If the gentleman will yield, he knows that is not true.

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, I have got to tell you about something I read in the paper this morning. It says Clinton told reporters before yesterday's meeting that now he thinks it is possible to reach the GOP goal of a balanced budget by 2002, using the conservative economic calculations by CBO.

Mr. Speaker, in the words of my good friend, fellow Ohioan and honorary theme team member, "Beam me up." Beam me up. It is unbelievable. The President says that he thinks it is possible to reach the GOP goal of a balanced budget by 2002. Did he read the language of the CR that he personally signed into law before he signed it? Did he read that language agreeing to do exactly that 30 days ago? And now he tells us, now he tells us that he thinks well, maybe it is possible to do that.

Mr. Speaker, what planet is the President on? This is just incredible.

AMBASSADOR SPIEGEL DESERVES OUR RESPECT

(Mr. RICHARDSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, in the Washington Post this morning there is a report about the majority leader and the Speaker expressing concern about remarks made by Ambassador Dan Spiegel, our U.N. representative in Geneva, for allegedly attacking the Congress.

Mr. Speaker, Ambassador Spiegel's remarks were taken out of context. He was not attacking the Congress. He was discussing the impact of a growing isolationist trend which has had a devastating impact on our payments to the United Nations and its specialized agencies.

Dan Spiegel worked in the U.S. Senate for 6 years for Senator Hubert Humphrey. He has great respect for this institution. In any event, Ambassador Spiegel has apologized and the matter should be put to rest.

Mr. Speaker, Ambassador Spiegel is one of our best ambassadors. We should now move on, now that his remarks have been clarified. He deserves our